



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 10/720,847 | 11/25/2003 | Hajime Kimura | 12732-181001 / US6768/692 | 3959 |
| 26171 | 7590 | 12/12/2008 | EXAMINER | |
| FISH & RICHARDSON P.C. P.O. BOX 1022 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440-1022 | | | PERVAN, MICHAEL | |
| | | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
| | | | 2629 | |
| | | | NOTIFICATION DATE | DELIVERY MODE |
| | | | 12/12/2008 | ELECTRONIC |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

PATDOCTC@fr.com

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 10/720,847 | KIMURA, HAJIME | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | Michael Pervan | 2629 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 August 2008.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1,7,18,20,21,28,59,60,63-66 and 71-87 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1,7,18,20,21,28,59,60,63-66 and 71-87 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 12 July 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

| | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/13/08</u> . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed August 13, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant (on pages 8-10 of argument) argues that it would not have been obvious to modify Knapp and Suzuki with Shin because the current flowing to both transistors would be the same regardless of their respective widths. Examiner respectively disagrees.

The Examiner used the teachings of Shin in the combination of Knapp and Suzuki to increase the current flowing from the precharge circuit to the driven circuit during the precharge phase in order to shorten the precharge time. For this reason, the combination still reads on the claim and the rejection stands.

Applicant (on pages 10-11 of argument) argues that Knapp and Suzuki describes or suggests a driven circuit including a first transistor, a precharge circuit including a second transistor, and a first switch for controlling an electrical connection between the driven circuit and the precharge circuit. Examiner respectively disagrees.

The precharge circuit of Suzuki would be connected to the driven circuit of Knapp through the switch 37 which would control the electrical connection between the driven circuit and the precharge circuit. Therefore, the combination still reads on the claim and the rejection stands.

Applicant (on pages 11-12 of argument) argues that the second switch does not control an electrical connection between the driven circuit and multiple current sources. Examiner respectively disagrees.

The driven circuit of Knapp is connected to the signal drive circuit of Suzuki. The drive circuit of Suzuki contains multiple current sources configured to input a signal to the driven circuit. Therefore, the switch controls an electrical connection between the driven circuit and plural current sources because it connects and disconnects the driven circuit from the signal drive circuit. Since the claim does not specify the driven circuit receives a signal selected from plural current sources, the combination still reads on the claim and the rejection stands.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 7, 18, 20, 21, 28, 59, 60, 63-66 and 71-87 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knapp et al (US 6,373,454) in view of Suzuki (US 6,369,786) in further view of Shin (US 2003/0231152).

In regards to claims 1, 71, 72, 76, 78 and 80, Knapp discloses a semiconductor device comprising:

a driven circuit comprising a first transistor (Fig. 2; transistor 30);

a signal line electrically connected to the first transistor through a node (Fig. 2; as can be seen from the drawing, the first transistor (30) is connected through a node (36) to a signal line),

wherein a gate electrode of the first transistor is connected to a drain electrode of the first transistor through a switch (Fig. 2 and col. 6, lines 32-34).

Knapp does not disclose a first precharge circuit electrically connected to the signal line and comprising a second transistor, wherein a gate electrode of a second transistor is electrically connected to a drain electrode of the second transistor, wherein a gate width of the second transistor is larger than a gate width of the first transistor and wherein the first precharge circuit is configured to perform a precharge of the driven circuit prior to supplying the signal current to the driven circuit.

Suzuki discloses a first precharge circuit (3A) electrically connected to the signal line and comprising a second transistor (diodes D₁-D_x) (col. 5, lines 50-54), wherein a gate electrode of a second transistor is electrically connected to a drain electrode of the second transistor (col. 5, lines 50-54; since connecting a transistor in such a manner causes the transistor to act as a diode, having a diode instead of a diode connected transistor would still act in the same manner), and wherein the first precharge circuit is configured to perform a precharge of the driven circuit prior to supplying the signal current to the driven circuit (col. 5, line 65-col. 6, line 7).

It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Knapp with the teachings of Suzuki, precharge voltage being supplied to a node prior to supplying a

signal current, because it would improve display characteristics since it would take less time to reach the display voltage because it has been precharged.

Knapp and Suzuki do not disclose wherein a gate width of the second transistor is larger than a gate width of the first transistor.

Shin discloses wherein a gate width of the second transistor is larger than a gate width of the first transistor (paragraph 16).

It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Knapp and Suzuki with the teachings of Shin, gate width of the second transistor being larger than the gate width of the first transistor, because it allows for a greater current to flow from the precharge circuit, which allows for a faster precharge.

In regards to claims 7 and 77, Knapp does not disclose the semiconductor device according to claim 1, further comprising

an impedance transformation amplifier.

Suzuki discloses an impedance transformation amplifier (col. 5, lines 62-63).

It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Knapp with the teachings of Suzuki, precharge voltage being supplied to a node prior to supplying a signal current, because it would improve display characteristics since it would take less time to reach the display voltage because it has been precharged.

In regards to claims 18 and 82, Knapp discloses a semiconductor device comprising:

a driven circuit comprising a first transistor (Fig. 2; first transistor (30));
a first switch for controlling an electrical connection between the driven circuit
and the precharge circuit (Fig. 2; first switch (33)); and
a second switch for controlling a connection between the driven circuit and a
current source circuit (Fig. 2; second switch (37)),
wherein a gate electrode of the first transistor is connected to a drain electrode of
the first transistor through a switch (Fig. 2 and col. 6, lines 32-34).

Knapp does not disclose a precharge circuit comprising a second transistor,
wherein a gate electrode of a second transistor is electrically connected to a drain
electrode of the second transistor, wherein a gate width of the second transistor is
larger than a gate width of the first transistor and wherein the first precharge circuit is
configured to perform a precharge of the driven circuit prior to supplying the signal
current to the driven circuit.

Suzuki discloses a first precharge circuit (3A) electrically connected to the signal
line and comprising a second transistor (diodes D₁-D_x) (col. 5, lines 50-54), wherein a
gate electrode of a second transistor is electrically connected to a drain electrode of
the second transistor (col. 5, lines 50-54; since connecting a transistor in such a
manner causes the transistor to act as a diode, having a diode instead of a diode
connected transistor would still act in the same manner), and wherein the first
precharge circuit is configured to perform a precharge of the driven circuit prior to
supplying the signal current to the driven circuit (col. 5, line 65-col. 6, line 7).

It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Knapp with the teachings of Suzuki, precharge voltage being supplied to a node prior to supplying a signal current, because it would improve display characteristics since it would take less time to reach the display voltage because it has been precharged.

Knapp and Suzuki do not disclose wherein a gate width of the second transistor is larger than a gate width of the first transistor.

Shin discloses wherein a gate width of the second transistor is larger than a gate width of the first transistor (paragraph 16).

It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Knapp and Suzuki with the teachings of Shin, gate width of the second transistor being larger than the gate width of the first transistor, because it allows for a greater current to flow from the precharge circuit, which allows for a faster precharge.

In regards to claims 20 and 83, Knapp discloses a semiconductor device comprising:

- a driven circuit comprising a first transistor (Fig. 2; first transistor (30));
- a first switch for controlling an electrical connection between the driven circuit and the plural precharge circuits (Fig. 2; first switch (33));
- a second switch for controlling an electrical connection between the driven circuit and the plural current source circuits (Fig. 2; second switch (37)).

Knapp does not disclose plural precharge circuits and plural current source circuits configured to input a signal current to the driven circuit.

Suzuki discloses plural precharge circuits (Fig. 4 and col. 4, lines 40-51) and plural current source circuits configured to input a signal current to the driven circuit (Fig. 4 and col. 13-26).

It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Knapp with the teachings of Suzuki, precharge voltage being supplied to a node prior to supplying a signal current, because it would improve display characteristics since it would take less time to reach the display voltage because it has been precharged.

In regards to claims 21, 59 and 85, Knapp does not disclose the semiconductor device according to claim 20, further comprising plural amplifier circuits for amplifying currents outputted from the plural precharge circuits.

Suzuki discloses plural amplifier circuits for amplifying currents outputted from the plural precharge circuits (col. 5, line 62-col. 6, line 7).

It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Knapp with the teachings of Suzuki, precharge voltage being supplied to a node prior to supplying a signal current, because it would improve display characteristics since it would take less time to reach the display voltage because it has been precharged.

In regards to claims 28 and 63, Knapp does not disclose the semiconductor device according to claim 22,
wherein a gate and a drain of the second transistor are connected to each other.

Suzuki discloses wherein a gate and a drain of the second transistor are connected to each other (col. 5, lines 50-54; since connecting a transistor in such a manner causes the transistor to act as a diode, having a diode instead of a diode connected transistor would still act in the same manner).

It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Knapp with the teachings of Suzuki, precharge voltage being supplied to a node prior to supplying a signal current, because it would improve display characteristics since it would take less time to reach the display voltage because it has been precharged.

In regards to claim 60, Knapp does not disclose the semiconductor device according to claim 20, wherein at least one of the plural precharge circuits comprises a second transistor.

Suzuki discloses the semiconductor device according to claim 20, wherein at least one of the plural precharge circuits comprises a second transistor (diodes D₁-D_x) (col. 5, lines 50-54).

It would have been obvious at the time of invention to modify Knapp with the teachings of Suzuki, precharge voltage being supplied to a node prior to supplying a signal current, because it would improve display characteristics since it would take less time to reach the display voltage because it has been precharged.

In regards to claims 64-66, 79 and 86, Knapp and Suzuki do not disclose the amplifier is a source follower circuit.

However, Suzuki discloses an impedance transformation amplifier (col. 5, lines 62-64).

Since there is no benefit or advantage in the specification for choosing an amplifier circuit to be a source follower circuit, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to choose an amplifier circuit to be a source follower circuit based on a designer's choice because a source follower circuit is one type of amplifier circuit.

In regards to claims 73-75, 81 and 87, Knapp and Suzuki do not disclose the semiconductor device according to claim 1, wherein the precharge circuit is included in a current drive circuit.

However, Suzuki discloses a precharge circuit (Fig. 4 and col. 3, lines 52-65).

Since there is no benefit or advantage described in the specification for having the precharge circuit with the driven circuit, it would have been obvious at the time of invention to choose either having the precharge circuit included with the driven circuit or separate from the driven circuit based on a design choice.

Conclusion

4. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Pervan whose telephone number is (571) 272-0910. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday between 8am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Amr Awad can be reached on (571) 272-7764. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MVP

/Amr Awad/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2629

Dec. 6, 2008